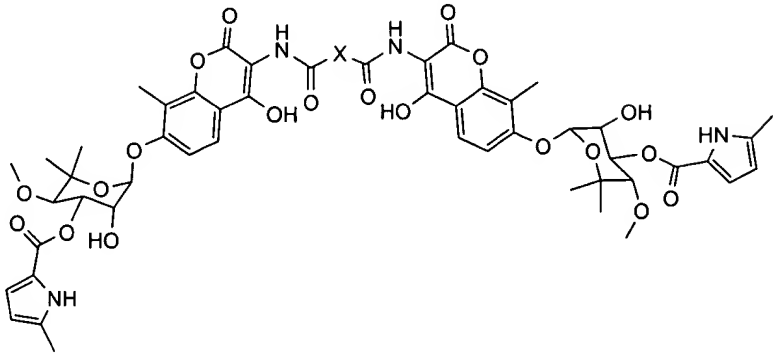
In the Claims

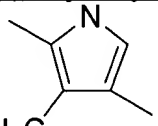
Amend the claims as follows:

1 (Currently amended). A compound of the formula I:



I

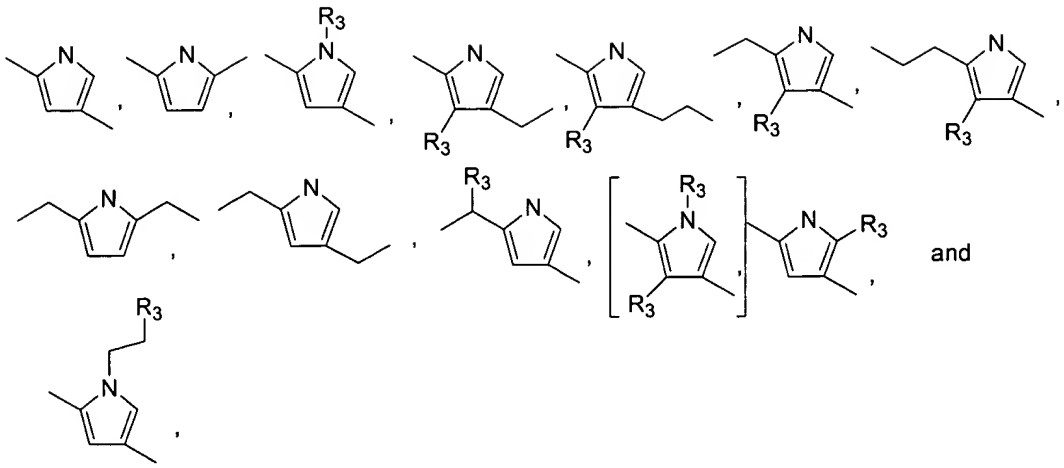
or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester thereof,

wherein X is a linking group [containing from about 1 to about 54 atoms that connects the two halves of the molecule] selected from the group consisting of straight, branched and cyclic alkyl, aryl, diaryl, heteroaryl, said alkyl, aryl, diaryl and heteroaryl optionally substituted with 1-3 groups of C_{1-6} alkyl or NH_2, alkyl with 1-3 heteroatoms in the chain, and a combination of alkyl, aryl and/or heteroaryl substituents, provided that when X is a heteroaryl it is not  .

2 (Canceled).

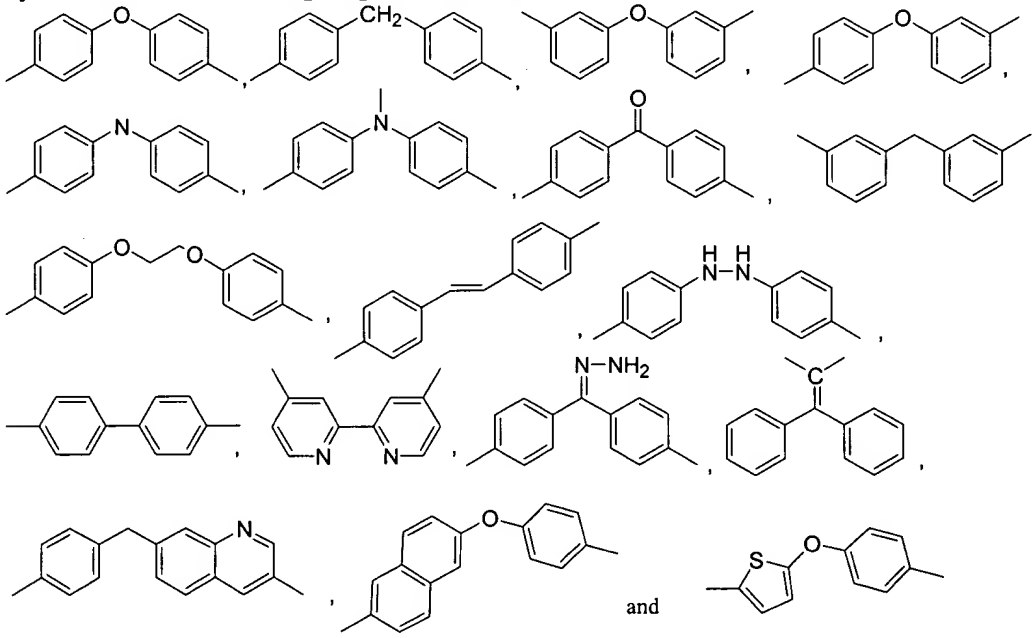
3 (Currently Amended). The compound according to Claim 1 wherein X is selected from the group consisting of pyrrole, pyridine, furan, indole, benzofuran, dibenzofuran, thiophene, straight chain alkyl, cycloalkyl, phenyl, diaryl and combinations thereof.

4 (Currently Amended). The compound according to Claim 3, wherein the pyrrolyl moiety is selected from the group consisting of

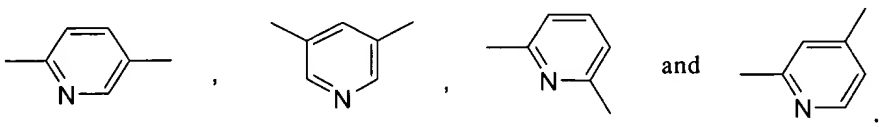


wherein R_3 is H or CH_3.

5 (Original). The compound according to Claim 3, wherein the diaryl moiety is selected from the group consisting of

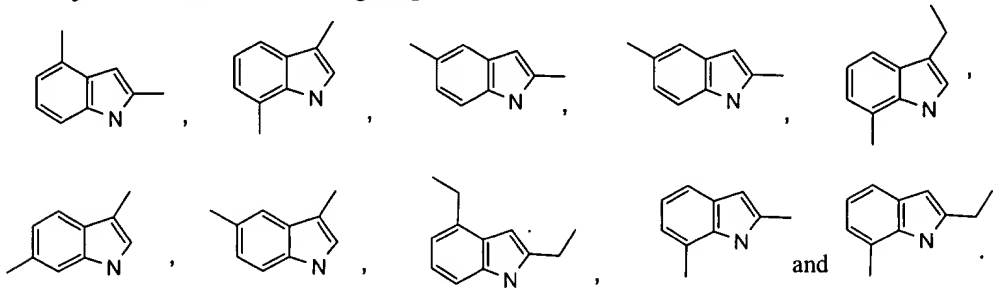


6 (Original). The compound according to Claim 3, wherein the pyridinyl moiety is selected from the group consisting of

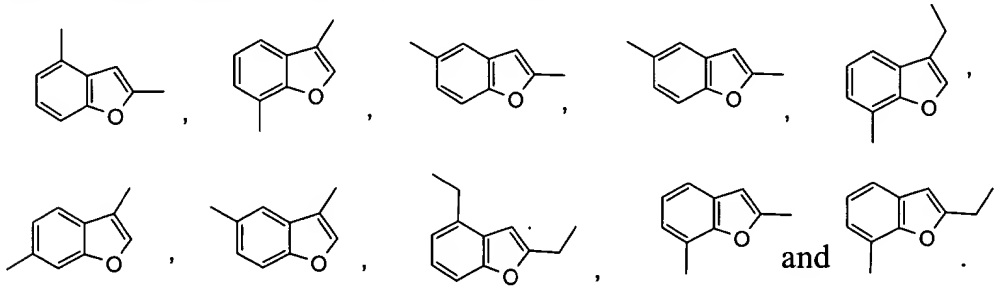


7 (Original). The compound according to Claim 3, wherein X is a straight chain alkyl moiety contains between one and eighteen carbons.

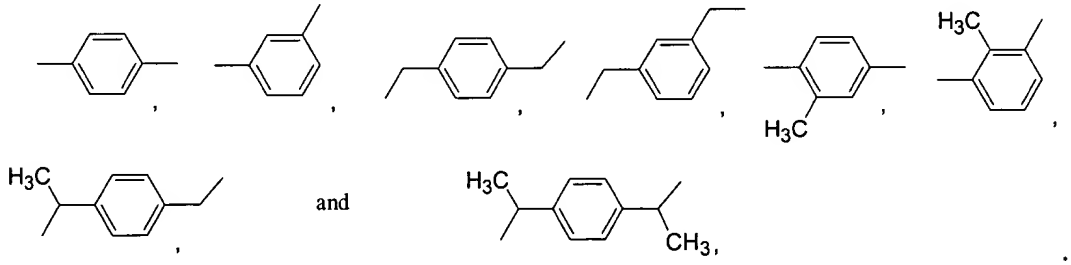
8 (Original). The compound according to Claim 3, wherein the indolyl moiety is selected from the group consisting of



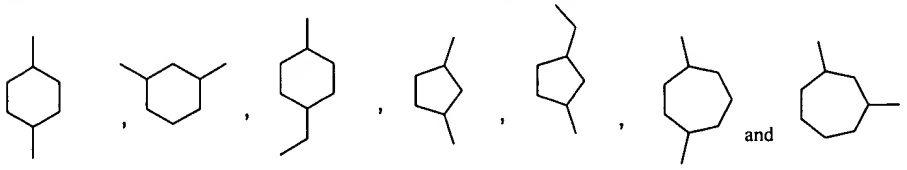
9 (Original). The compound according to Claim 3, wherein the benzofuranyl moiety is selected from the group consisting of



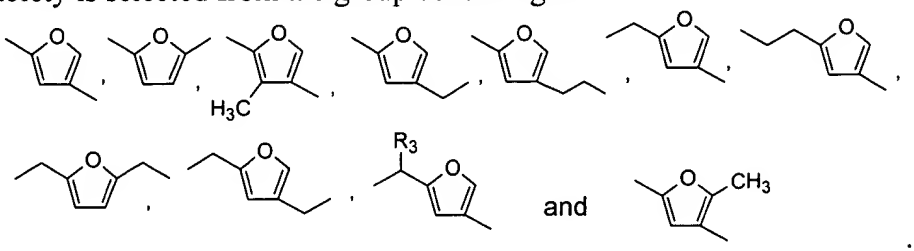
10 (Original). The compound according to Claim 3, wherein the phenyl moiety is selected from the group consisting of



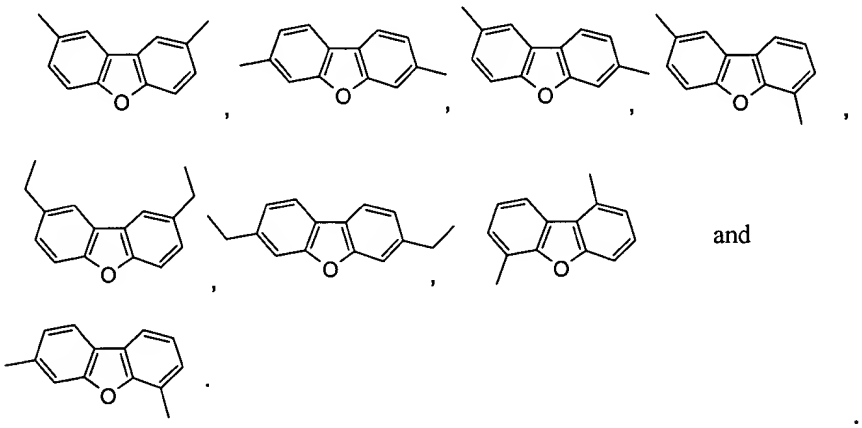
11 (Original). The compound according to Claim 3, wherein the cycloalkyl moiety is selected from the group consisting of



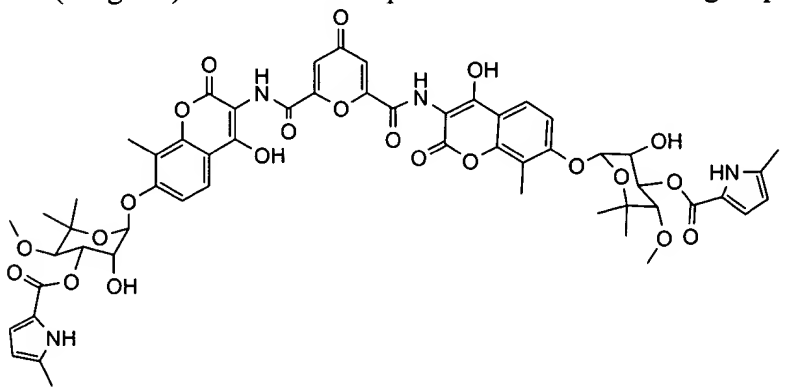
12 (Original). The compound according to Claim 3, wherein the furanyl moiety is selected from the group consisting of

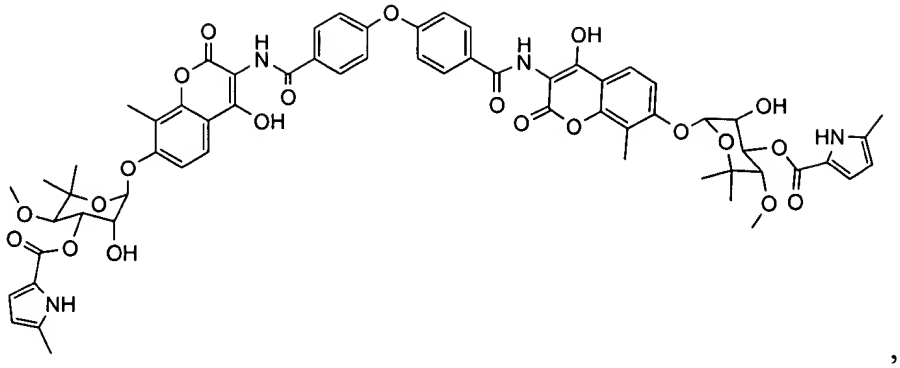


13 (Original). The compound according to Claim 3, wherein the dibenzofuranyl moiety is selected from the group consisting of



14 (Original). A compound selected from the group consisting of





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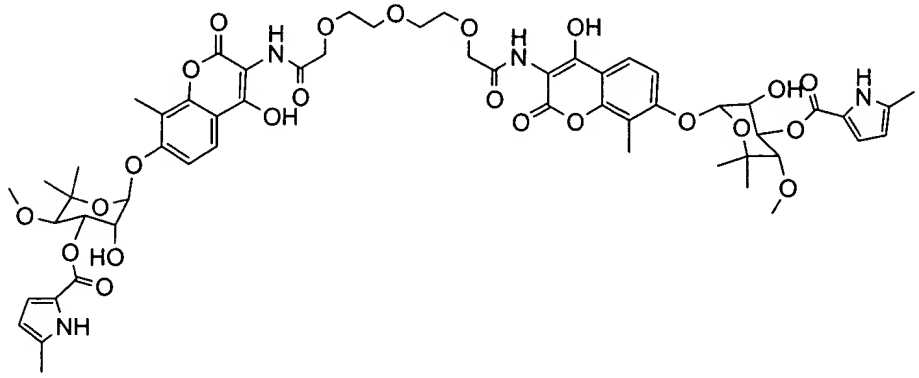

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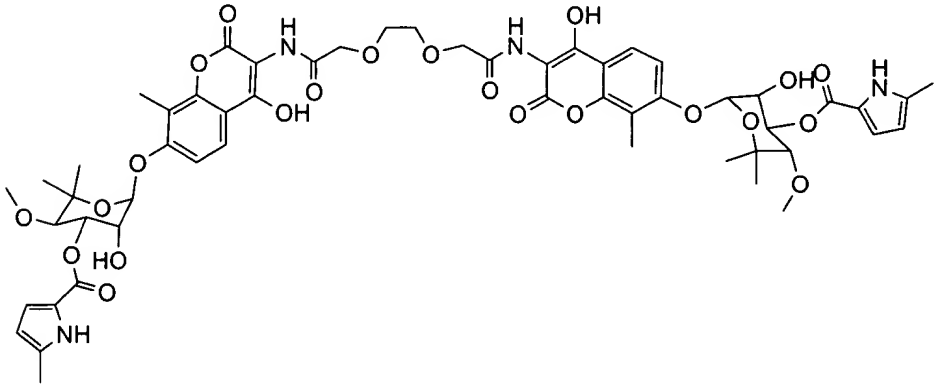

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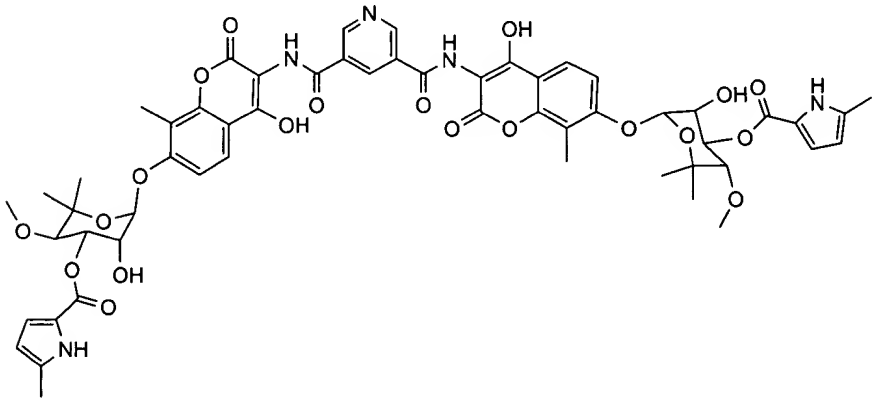

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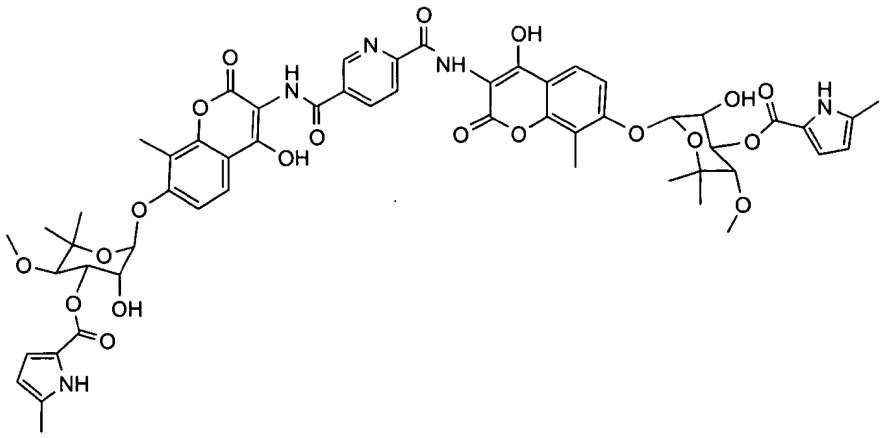

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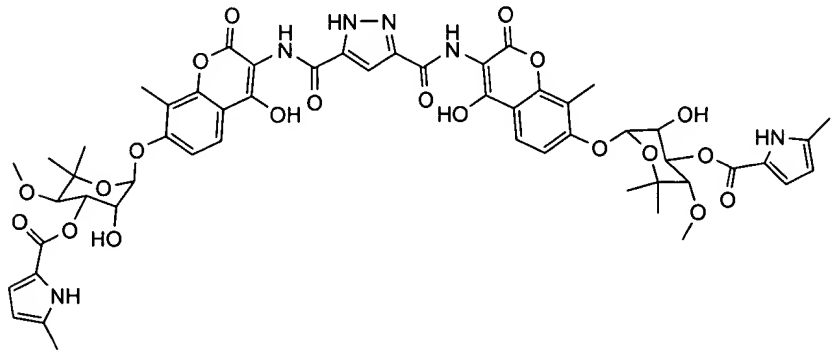

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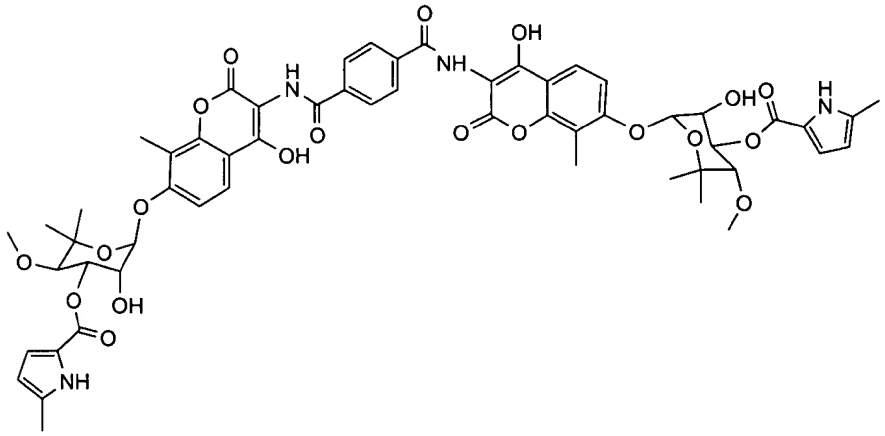

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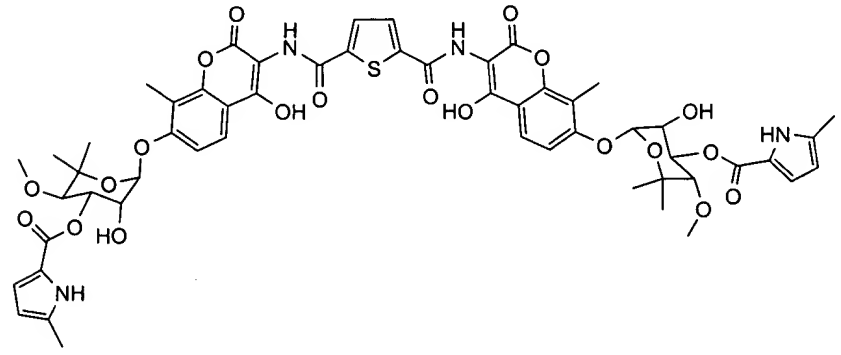
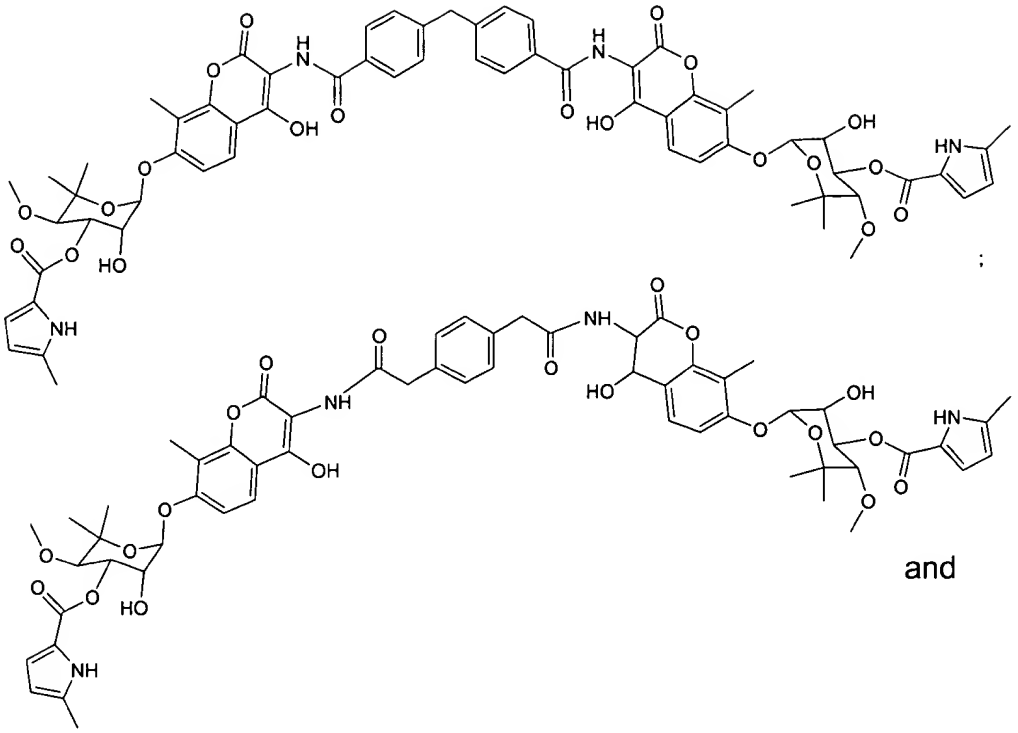
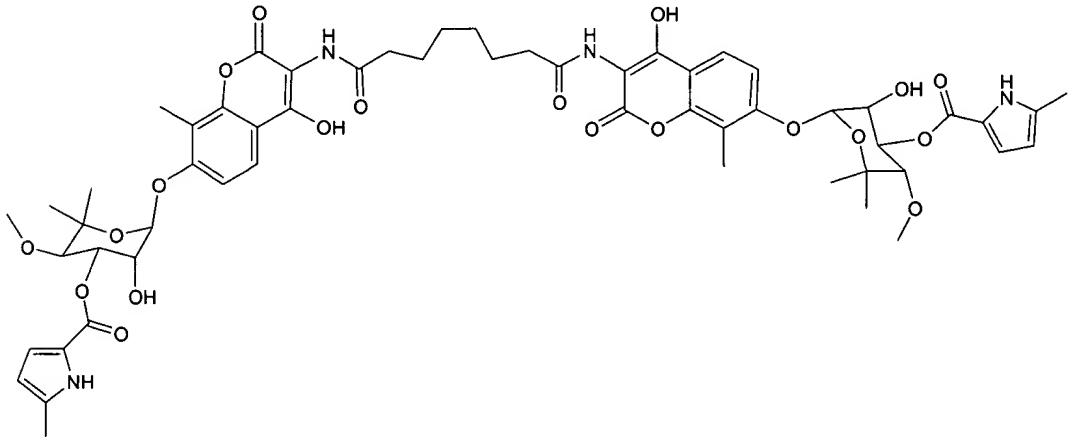
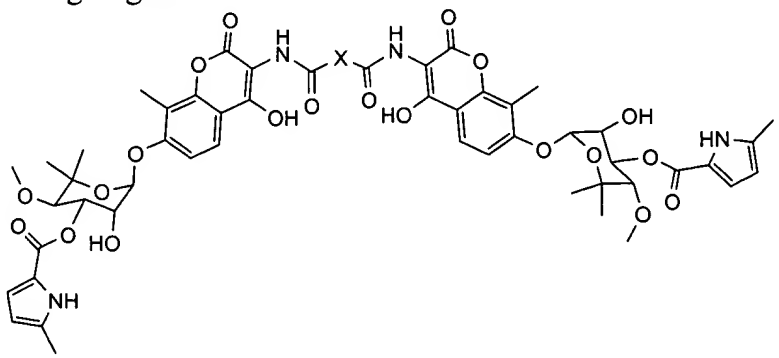




and



15 (Original). A method of chemically dimerizing chimeric proteins utilizing a coumermycin analog of general formula I:

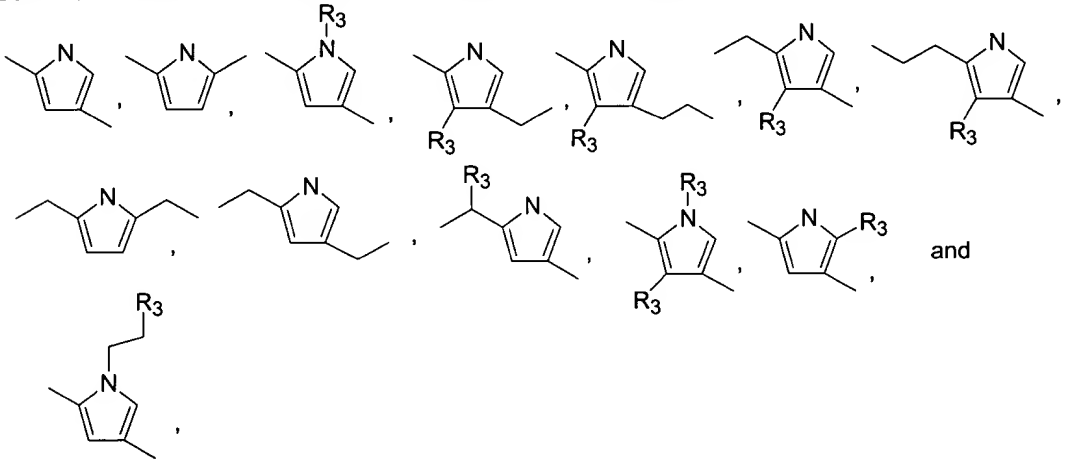


or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester thereof,

wherein X is a linking group X is selected from the group consisting of straight, branched and cyclic alkyl, aryl, diaryl, heteroaryl, said alkyl, aryl, diaryl and heteroaryl optionally substituted with 1-3 groups of C_{1-6} alkyl or NH_2, alkyl with 1-3 heteroatoms in the chain, and a combination of alkyl, aryl and/or heteroaryl substituents.

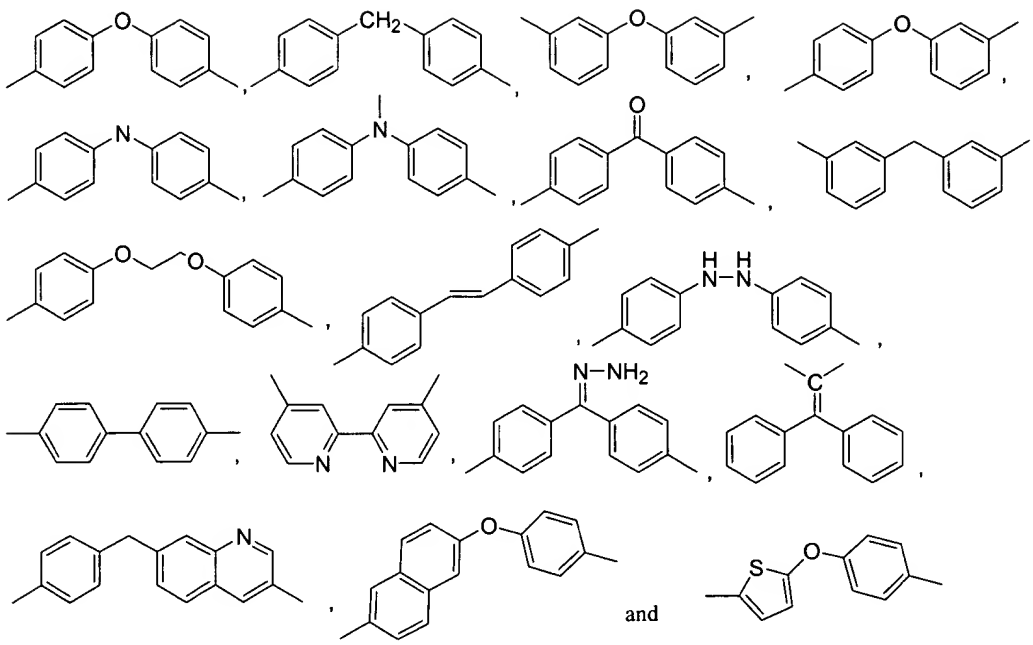
16 (Original). A method according to claim 15 wherein X is selected from the group consisting of pyridine, furan, indole, benzofuran, pyrrole, dibenzofuran, thiophene, straight chain alkyl, cycloalkyl, phenyl, diaryl and combinations thereof.

17 (Original). The method according to Claim 16, wherein the pyrrolyl moiety is selected from the group consisting of

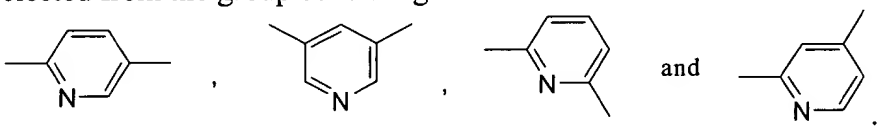


wherein R_3 is H or CH_3.

18 (Original). The method according to Claim 16, wherein the diaryl moiety is selected from the group consisting of

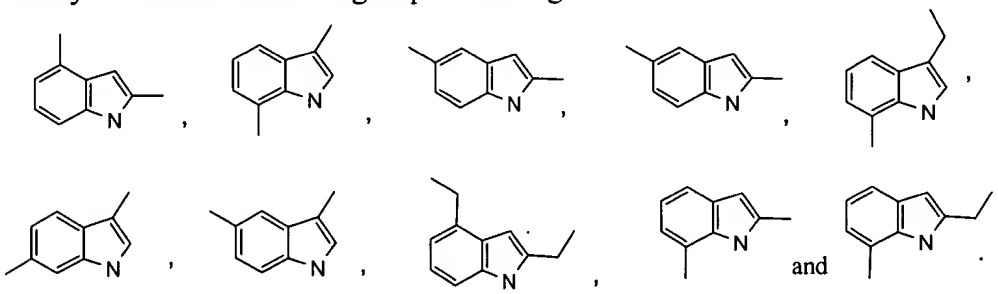


19 (Original). The method according to Claim 16, wherein the pyridine moiety is selected from the group consisting of

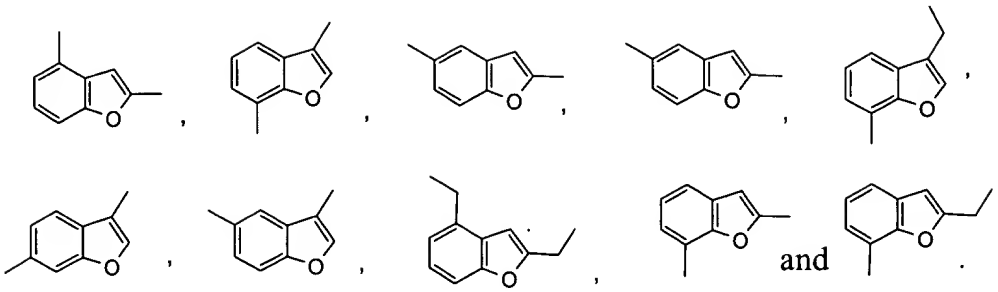


20 (Original). The method according to Claim 16, wherein the straight chain alkyl moiety contains from about one and about eighteen carbon atoms.

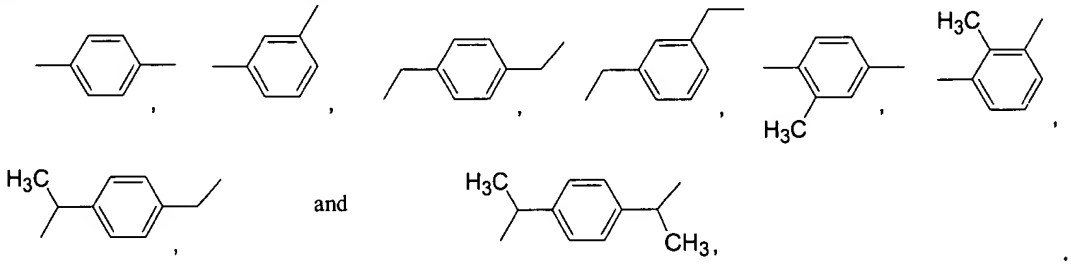
21 (Original). The method according to Claim 16, wherein the indolyl moiety is selected from the group consisting of



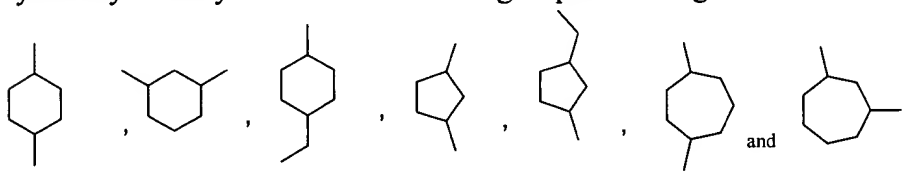
22 (Original). The method according to Claim 16, wherein the benzofuranyl moiety is selected from the group consisting of



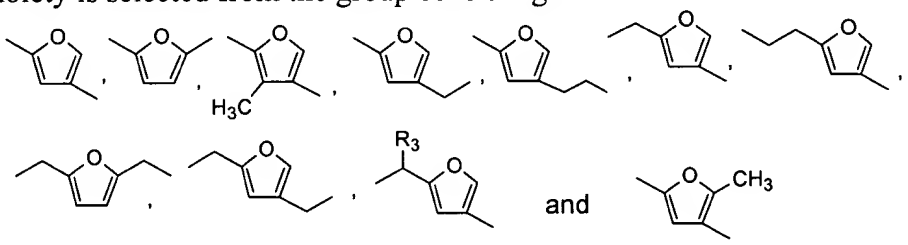
23 (Original). The method according to Claim 16, wherein the phenyl moiety is selected from the group consisting of



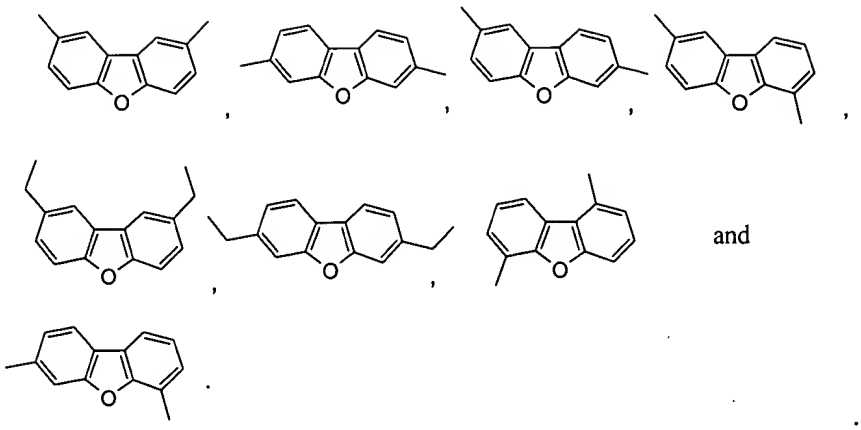
24 (Original). The method according to Claim 16, wherein the cycloalkyl moiety is selected from the group consisting of



25 (Original). The method according to Claim 16, wherein the furanyl moiety is selected from the group consisting of



26 (Original). The method according to Claim 16, wherein the dibenzofuranyl moiety is selected from the group consisting of


and

27 (Canceled).

28 (Original). A composition useful for promoting the dimerization of chimeric signaling, intracellular proteins comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier and a compound of formula I.